Uplifts of Heart and Will

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J. H. West.

Jan. 1, 1889.

UPLIFTS OF HEART AND WILL

A SERIES OF

Religious Meditations, or Aspirations

ADDRESSED TO EARNEST MEN AND WOMEN

BY JAMES H. WEST

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It is suggested that where these Meditations, or Aspirations, are used by congregations, the reading of the same may be either by Leader and People, in concert, or else in the form of a responsive service,—in which latter case *alternate sentences* may be read by the Leader and People. Where thus used (in the form of responses), the close of each sentence will be found to be sufficiently marked, for ease in reading, by the natural punctuation (the "period"). To have broken up the Meditations into separate short paragraphs would have been, it would seem, to disfigure the pages of the book unnecessarily.

The Salutation, Aspiration, and Benediction, on page 5, explain themselves.

Where used in the Family, for Morning Upward-Looking, the number of general Meditations will be found sufficient for daily use, for one month, without repetition.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

DOUBTLESS the human heart will never cease to aspire. There will always be hopeful possibilities calling man onward. And to attain to the Best, man must reach forth towards the Goal sought, with his soul as well as with mind and hand. This "reaching forth," this "aspiration," will be Prayer.

Some may question, at times, whether Prayer of the ordinary pattern—the Prayer addressed, with the easy familiarity of a patron, to the Unseen yet Ever-present—will not sometime pass away. True communion with the Divine need not necessarily be in the form of "address," nor consist only of "petition." But Prayer—real Prayer—the upward-looking of the soul towards the Moral Ideal, together with a forceful urging of the will to the attainment in the life of all nobility and wholeness,—this, with the growing years, will come to mean more and more for man. It will never pass away.

Again, it is never in "petitional address," at all, that the soul enters into truly exalted calm, or meets its highest incentive to purposeful activity. No true, manly, self-reliant spirit is ever uplifted—is ever anything but abased—by begging! Yet, ever, the order and beauty and bounty of the natural world call on man for *recognition* and *acceptance*, that he may pattern his own life thereby; and the sphere of exalting sentiment flames within his own inner being, urging him ceaselessly to purity, to truth, and to world-helpfulness.

How may we consistently seize on all this mighty possible good,—outside of us, and within,—and take it into our lives,

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without seeming to doubt the beneficence of the general good providence, through which the Eternal is forever manifested whether we pray or not, and without seeming to despair of our own ability to act as proximate causes, and to bring about, ourselves, the results we wish?

One minister, in his regular weekly religious services during the past few years, has endeavored to solve this problem; and in the present volume he has embodied a sufficient number of Religious Meditations, or Aspirations,—*addressed to reverent, loving, aspiring men and women*,—to supply in some part the desire and demand which has forced itself urgently upon him.

The poems at the end of the volume are Upward-Lookings also. In some sort they may be held to comprise, in little, the main thought of the prose numbers preceding them.

Salutation.

To be sung by all, without announcement, as the congregation rises for the Meditation.

Our wills now turn,—and turn our hearts,—
To whence the Stream of Being starts;
That in our strife for perfect Good
The ills of life may be withstood.

Aspiration.

To be sung by all, without announcement, at the close of the Meditation.

Now may our inmost Being feel
The glory of the far Ideal!
And in the Strength we have descried
May faith and will be fortified!

Benediction.

To be sung by all, without announcement, after the Closing Word of the Leader.

The gracious Might of earth and sky
Pursues us though we live or die:
That Might—which may be ours—be praised!
And to its height our souls be raised!

*** Any familiar long-meter tune—"Missionary Chant," "Old Hundred," or other—may be used for the above.

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"The prayer that looks for interference is a prayer for more of God. A universe brimful of God is not enough! . . . . We must not be liars in our devotions. We must not make a show of asking *God* for this or that, in order that we may economize some reflex influence of our petition."—J. W. CHADWICK, *The Faith of Reason.*

"Prayer-address [as usually looked upon, we hold to be] a belittling of that solemn mystery in which we and the wide world rest. For it is not, let me distinctly say, in the name of materialism or phenomenalism, but because of a deeper sense of that mystery, that I abandon [public] prayer. . . We may [however] pray to our fellow men; we may appeal to one another."—W. M. SALTER, *Basis of the Ethical Movement.*

"The prayer of Emerson at Cambridge, we are told, had no pronouns in it. Was it, then, not a prayer? If anything hereafter is to be recognized as valid and uplifting, it is the expression of reverential thought. . . . . Partially have we interpreted human experience, and missed the divine, if we have not seen that in that conflict with self which speaks in *soliloquy*, in that struggle with things or affairs which breaks forth in earnest *meditation*, as well as in that recognition of the God of theology which urges every *petition* with its imploring Thou, alike God is present and God is invoked. The distinction between the me and the not-me is the unsolved problem of philosophy."—J. C. LEARNED, *The Future of Religion.*

"I am to live listening to the voice in my own soul, and to no other but as sanctioned by this. . . . The adoration of goodness—this is religion."—*Channing.*

UPLIFTS OF HEART AND WILL.

I.

THROUGH love, to the source of love we fain would look, and, finding the highest love, would strive to attain thereto.

Pressed upon, on every side, by the mighty forces of the universe, which, looked at largely, are progressive and helpful, we strive to go back of them all, beyond them all, to search out the eternal spirit which is their origin, and, entering into communion therewith, be blessed and prospered. Beauty and bounty surround us; order and progress are before our eyes, the signs of the normal way of all true working. May we put away, therefore, all evil from us; all that results in pain and sorrow and remorse; all that holds men back; all that brings degradation and death, and seek for the things of the Highest Life;—working, not *against* the progressive, helpful order of things, but with that order: working together with the eternal, developing energy—in the upbuilding and perfecting of our bodies, in the cultivation of our minds, in the elevation of our spiritual natures.

May we all be blessed and helped in the Upward Way. May we do our part to cleanse the world, to

relieve it of its sorrows; to do away with all those things which work ruin to men. May we feel that the world *can* be made sweeter and cleaner and better; that men *can* be brought to where they will see that purity and temperance and righteousness are the normal and proper states; and that passion and *im*purity and *in*temperance work nothing but pain and loss. May we do what we can to reveal to men that they cannot fight the highest things and the best things and meet anything but defeat—dust and ashes, anguish and suffering. Thus will all men be blessed.

May the sorrowing, to-day, find joy out of their pain; may the bereaved find gain in their loss; may the earnest find trust in their doubt. May the true Commonwealth of Man—of peace, and of faith in the eternal progress—come speedily to pass.

2.

Breathed upon, and animated, and blest, by the life-energy of the universe, in which life we live and of which we are a part, we would be grateful for existence, and for the beautiful world about us, with its changing seasons, its sunshine and rain and dew, its days of warmth and springing life, its days of cloud and storm,—"heat, wet, cold, dry, and peace and pain,"—all things that go to the upbuilding of men, and to the developing of grain and grass and flower and fruit for man's benefit. We would not be un-

grateful. Life well-lived is good. Truth and beauty of spirit and purity of heart make life a blessedness and delight. The universe is in league with those who seek for rightness of life. May we make the most of our opportunities, building ourselves up in every possible way; that, as the future slowly unfolds before us, we may see ourselves and the world of men about us, through our efforts, growing better and stronger and happier and more upright.

May holy ambition be ours. May divine aspiration be ours. May fuller, larger life be ours. May we say to the hurry and turmoil and care and grief and temptation of life, Ye shall not oppress us! And to the beauty and strength and sweetness, the good and blessedness of life, may we say, Come ye, enter into our souls; dwell with us! Behold, at the door ye stand and knock. And unto you we open gladly, rejoicingly, the inner, most secret, most sacred chambers of our being. Come in! come in! dwell with us, and we with you!

3.

With earnest and reverent hearts we gather again, to look into each others' faces, to take each others' hands, and to find, in mutual fellowship and sympathetic thought, strength and hope for coming days.

All good forces are around about us. Like the sun-

shine,—like the rain and the snow, that in their season come down from the skies, and water the earth and make it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater,—so are *all* the sure mercies of the eternal developing power. Summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, do not fail. Likewise, all sources of physical strength, of mental growth, of spiritual exaltation, are ever open to us, if we but look with our eyes and hear with our ears, and stretch forth our hands—*in the right way.*

May we this day, therefore, incline our hearts unto true wisdom! May we not dwell, *any* day, altogether among the things of mere living! Not that we may slight our daily duties;—we must be earnest in acquiring and careful in spending; we must labor and love and live. Yet must we also sometimes turn our thoughts up and out, searching for that which is the source of our life,—for that which is our Higher Life,—finding, in our thought of the abiding reality, and in our aspiration towards all that is true, and pure, and noble, and beautiful, and of good-report, comfort and encouragement and trust.

May the young, this day, have courageous hearts, and high ideals, and earnest wills. May the old have repose and peace. May the sorrowing find ease; the weary, rest; the sick, new health; the sinner, strength to be true. May *all* men be blessed,—and may we all do our part in bringing about the blessing.

4.

We bow our heads and our hearts, this hour, in brotherly and sisterly confession! Confession is good for the soul—if it leads to an avoidance, afterward, of the sins and evils confessed. To know our weaknesses is good,—if knowing them makes us watchful to overcome them. Bowing, this hour, in recognition of the might of the unseen and eternal,—the might of that which is *ideally* just and pure and true,—how poor, how weak, how empty, how meager, how tarnished, how sinful, in comparison, appear our souls!

Have we been oftentimes unjust to our fellows? Have we wronged any one? Have we deceived our neighbors—thoughtlessly, perhaps, oftentimes, but no less deceived them? We shrink from confessing that we have defrauded any one!—but have we not, *in any way?* Have we held impure thoughts? Have we been revengeful in spirit? Have we taken pleasure in seeing evil befall any man, who, perhaps, has previously injured *us?* Have we been impatient with the sins of our world-brothers and world-sisters who are weaker than we are? Do we forget the many trials and cares, and the ignorance of the right way, and the weakness of will, which are theirs? Do we put ourselves always in their place before we judge them?

Have we been kind to those in need? Have we

been a father to the fatherless and a friend to the widow? Have we seen any real distress or want, which we might have alleviated,—and failed to do our part? Have we passed the wounded and the sorrowing by, on the other side? . . . .

Would that divine power and love might enter into our souls, and strength into our bodies and wills! We would be better men and women! We *ought* to be better men and women! . . . .

May all who mourn, this day, be comforted—trusting in the Heart of Good. May all who are in need find a human providence watching to supply. May all who sin be encouraged to overcome. May all men find rest and peace!

5.

Entering into the secret chamber of our being, we desire first of all, this hour, truth in our inmost souls, and that in the hidden ways of life we may be made to know wisdom! For of wisdom and truth we have ceaseless need !

Pressed on by the many variances and trials of life, thrown about here and there by the strong forces of good and evil, that abound not only in the world of matter but also in the world of mind and morals, we seek truth—wisdom—in order that we may know how wisely to try to guide our feet through the maze of each new day's experience. Life is not

what we would have it. Life is not what we feel that we might *make* it, either for ourselves or for those about us. Too often, and overmuch, we deem ourselves weak and poor and ignorant! "Behold, we know not anything!" Whereas, the sorrows that press us down; the griefs that abound about us; the disappointments that are our daily food; the impatience and irritableness that possess us; the passions and down-dragging desires that keep us in continual war—that keep us in battle which results, how frequently, in utter defeat—might all be largely, if indeed not wholly overcome by us, if we but turned ourselves, inquiringly and resolutely, to study and thought and will!

As not yet too late, our hearts turn *now* to these, and towards all that is good and true! And searching out and seizing on all the helpful, beneficial, uplifting forces of the world about us,—and forgetting, thrusting from us, so far as we may, the evils and sorrows and works of death that strive to hold us back,—we would henceforth seek to follow the right! We would strive, each one of us, from this time onward, to be pure, true, upright, helpful men and women, looking for all the Strong Might of the Real and of the Ideal, and taking that Might directly into our own lives—as we may!

6.

MAY we look ever towards the Ideal, and urge onward our wills to its attainment! For herein, only, is our rational salvation:—in the furthering of purity, of right trust, of truth, and honor, and honesty, and helpfulness, through the holding and following of Ideals! The mighty need, in every soul of man, for all high, hopeful sentiment, calls to us to search out a Goal of Good, and to strive so to run that we may gain it. For we all live a dual life! We live the life that is low and "animal,"—the life of selfishness, of avarice, of bitterness, of lack of sympathy towards others, of panderings to evil habit: the life of the race's ancient imperfection still present in our blood and brain. And this life drags us, frequently,—daily, it may be,—to the mouth of "hell." Nay, sometimes we go in! And on the devil's rack of physical pain, and in the fires of spiritual remorse, we meet the torments of the "damned."

And we live, also, the life that is high and holy,—the life of uplifting sentiment; of aspiration; of hope for purity; of love for truth and beauty; the life of good will to others; of sacrifice of self that others may be blessed: the life of developing spirit *overcoming* the race's ancient tendencies. And *this* life draws us frequently,—it may be daily,—it ought to be hourly,—to the gates of "heaven." More than to the

gates! Here, also, sometimes, we go in! And in the shade of the trees of peace, and by the water of the river of Life, we whisper the soul-songs of the "redeemed."

We recognize, moreover, that it depends on the "predominance" of one of these lives, over the other, in us, how we should estimate—yes, and how we shall meet—our growing destiny! We may know, at any rate, that our growing destiny—of joy, or pain—depends largely, if not altogether, on ourselves. We ourselves must overcome the low and base in us; we ourselves must come into harmony with Good; we ourselves must follow to gain the Ideal!

May we, then, this day, and through all coming time,—seek the Good! making That, quickly, the "predominant" life we live! Let us give our thought to virtue; our wills to righteousness; our hands to helpfulness; make the religion we profess a religion of saving power; live in the Ideal; in the sphere of exalted sentiment and exalting deed. . . . . And this shall be to us as a new and actual "Redeemer,"—a salvation from all sin; an entrance even here administered unto us, abundantly, into the ever-increasing kingdom of right and blessedness. *We shall be growing into harmony with the upward-trending Nature of Things.*

7.

Asking, that we may receive; seeking, that we may find; knocking, that it may be opened unto us, we come again, bowing in the presence of the eternal truth, bowing in the presence of the good and the just, and of everything that is everlasting, seeking to know how best to live, how rightly to conduct ourselves on our way onward and upward from out of the infinite mystery of the past towards the infinite mystery of the future. We know that the humble, the lowly in spirit, are blessed, and do enter into the kingdom of peace. We know that they who rightly mourn—mourn for the evil and wrong of their past, and henceforth turn their hearts and wills towards the right—are blessed, and comforted. We know that the truly meek are blessed, and do inherit the best things of earth. We know that they who hunger and thirst after righteousness are blessed, and filled with joy so that such hunger and thirst are happiness. We know that the merciful are blessed, for in their own souls they, too, obtain mercy. We know that the pure in heart are blessed, for they see the God within them. We know that the peacemakers are blessed, for they are the true children of the eternal power which, in its higher human manifestations, "makes" for peace.

So we strive for the *attainment* of all this blessed-

ness!—strive to be humble; to mourn—not despairingly, but encouragingly and progressively; to be truly meek; to attain righteousness; to be merciful; to be pure in heart; to be peacemakers. Our hearts go out towards all that is Good! To all that is evil we would say, Get thee far from us! Moreover, may we this hour be helped and strengthened not only to *see* the true eternal way of peace, but may our feet be led to walk therein! Then, though we indeed may still feel our weakness,—our need,—we shall never doubt the final outcome, we shall never doubt the Victory of the Good.

May we have the will and the courage to *do our part*,—banishing the seductive wiles of evil, of lowness, of superstition, of religion falsely so-called, and giving all our soul and heart and mind and strength to the religion that is true. Thus may we and all the world be blessed.

8.

With reverent hearts we seek the eternal power which is our life and our strength—in which we live and move and have our being. What are we, the dependent creatures of the all-developing energy, if solely in our own strength we endeavor to go on! We know that of ourselves we are nothing. We know that without the morning light and the evening shade, without the breath of the air, and the

moisture of the rain from heaven, and the wheat from the field, we would vanish away like smoke. In seeking God we seek our life. In seeking our life we seek God. While *now* we seek the Highest and Best, may our souls be filled with earnest hopes.

And not only with hopes, but with highest determinations also! For we know that without our *own earnest labor*, we *still* are nothing! It is by *accepting* the helpful forces about us, and using them aright, that we are built up.

Suns may shine, and darkness may bring sleep to us; rain may fall, and fields may offer place for seed; but unless *we* rise up early, and go forth to labor till the evening, no harvest is ours. Unless *we* strive against and put all evil away from us, good comes not. Unless *we* tread out from the paths of our hearts the weeds of selfishness and sin, our nobler, truer life is choked, and lies withered.

May we have strength in our weakness! May we have courage in our doubt; faith and hope in all. May we fight a valiant battle throughout life, and come off conquerors. May we strive to be true to ourselves and helpful to others—honest and severe with ourselves, and patient and sympathetic with others. So shall we see a truer life coming to pass on earth, and we shall be led on into the future hopefully.

9.

We seek, this hour, strength and wisdom for the battle of life. We look back over our life-path, and we see—weakness, dalliance, defeat. Many things have conspired to aid and encourage us; home, and friends, education to a greater or less degree, the beauty of the world, the necessities of life—which have brought us into contact with the forces which work together for the progress of the world. Many things have conspired to aid and encourage us, if we have but looked upon them as we should, and used them as we should.

And many things also have conspired *against* us! —pangs of nature, sins of will, defects of doubt, and taints of blood—lions in our path; and we have faltered, have yielded, and been overcome by them. We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we should have done.

With great desire, we desire at this time, and in all coming time, strength and wisdom; that hereafter we may do better; that hereafter we may be stronger, making new and sure progress each new day—as we wish to do, and as we strive to do—in the way of perfection; which is the way of holiness—*wholeness.*

A part of this universe, we feel that we have work to do. A part of this mighty scheme of ever-increasing beauty and strength and grandeur which the ages

are evolving, we feel that we have, every one of us, a duty to perform. The forces of life about us call to us—physical, mental, moral, spiritual; and the needs of men command our earnest work. . . . . And beyond this, through love, to the source of love we fain would look, and, finding the highest love, would therein dwell, that ours and the world's may be not only health of body and happiness of heart, but the fruits of the spirit also—which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance; against which there is no law. May all this great good indeed come to us! May we *study and strive* to have it come to us.

10.

THE sunlight calls us to gladness. The Spirit of Life throbs all about us—in its glow the worlds revolve. Under its influence the trees and flowers bud and bloom. Through its ceaseless outpourings our own hearts pulsate with joy and good-will, with faith and hope and trust.

Shone on, thus, by the Ever-present Beauty, may we believe life good, and live it well! May we work also for the future of earth, and of our world-fellows to be. And may we not fear to dream of our own future; the rather, may we deem it sure—whatever it shall prove in the detail which now we cannot grasp. Above all, may we feel that, whatever

it shall be, we ourselves, now, are helping to make it; are making it. May we be confident that an approach to perfection—the possibility of higher and purer joys than earth-bound, passion-led beings ever know—is to be attained, here or anywhere, only by the overcoming, *on our own part*, of the evil that is inherent in us as offspring of earth's unsublimated forces.

As far as may be, may we take those forces wisely in hand, and sublimate them even now!—turning chaos and old darkness into helpfulness and light. May we study how we *may* do this. And may we ever have hope and courage,—trusting never in any miraculous aid from without, nor ever in any magic formula, but *seeking* that we may find, and *knocking* that it may be opened unto us.

May we live to help others also, turning many to the Better Way.

II.

FROM the world of the actual, the world of struggle and turmoil and sin, withdrawing; into the world of the Ideal, the world of courage and hope and high endeavor, entering,—this hour may our inward ear be opened to catch superior sounds! What is this hurrying, bustling, wayward, anxious, disappointing life, with its losses unending, its aggravations and griefs continuous,—if in our care and weari-

ness there come not hope and trust, and a consciousness of the Might that lies in Right; a consciousness of the Might that lies in loving the Good, however little, to ourselves, we may seem at times to rise! in aspiring for the perfect, however small, to us, seems often our actual attainment! in laboring, against whatever obstacles, for Purity and Justice and Upward-Looking and Love in the world! For we know that the universe itself, with all its higher developing forces, is *on the side* of all these things; and if we are on the universe's side, then nothing of real harm can ever come to us. We shall go on from strength to strength.

May we strive for faithfulness and courage! that the battle of life may indeed prove, for us all, not a valley of Desolation and Defeat, but a mountain-height of Victory! Sin—may we spurn it! Hatred and covetousness—may we flee from them! Love—may we seize hold upon it! Good-will—may we embrace it! Struggle for our uplifting, and for the nobler benefit of our fellows—may we give our lives to this.

Come, spirit of truth! dwell with us! Come, spirit of progress! inspire us! Come, spirit of good! spirit of holiness! spirit of purity and cleanliness and beauty! animate us!

12.

CONSCIOUS of weakness, of imperfection, in the presence of the Ideal Moral Law, we come together with hope and reverence, to reach out hands of faith after the true deity, and to seek to understand our duty in relation to the laws of the Higher Life—of the Blessed Best.

We know the lower life—we feel its smart, its pain, its bitterness, its inadequateness to satisfy the soul. We have visions of a heaven—a heaven on earth; where peace, and purity, and health, and good-will, reign eternal—where beauty and order are ever present. And we strive to enter in at the narrow gate of truth and love, and of obedience to law, which shall give us, *as those who have overcome*, the right to sit down upon the universe's throne, even as all the good and pure of the past have overcome, and have sat down!

May we strive day by day to be faithful to the Best—faithful to the best that is in us, and to the best that is outside of us. We know the right, and we approve it; may we also *work*, being hearers of the word not only, but also doers.

Our hearts go out, as always, towards all, the world over, who are in sorrow; towards all who have met loss; towards all who are bound in chains of evil habit—who want to do better, and yet seem to be

held back. May hope and strength and courage come to all such—and a helping human hand! Men *must* be true; men *must* be faithful and pure and clean. And there *must* be Helpers. Only for the pure in heart and the earnest in life is the crown of righteousness reserved; only by such is the Eternal Life Now attained. May we be, all of us, both of those who overcome and of those who help.

May wrong and oppression cease over the whole earth. May wars be done away with. May doubt and darkness flee away, and all men come out into the Light and the Truth.

13.

BEFORE the mystery of living, and the beauty of the world, we stand with eager, questioning, worshipful hearts—seeking to know what it all means; seeking to know the right, and full of an earnest, abiding desire for will and energy to follow that right. Around us everywhere are order and beauty, and the evidences of increasing strength and progress. May we not be unmindful of our part in it all—our duty! or of our great opportunities. May our souls burn within us with a love for what is pure and upright and clean. May we seek for the highest life, the best life, the truest life. We know we can be better than we are—we know we can build ourselves up in truth and purity and sincerity and earnestness far beyond

our present attainment in any of these things. Beauty for ashes we seek, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness!

May we strive to have *the Good* in us come to the front! The evil and the low in us may we put down and thrust aside. Thus shall our blinded eyes be cleared, and we shall see that life has meaning, where now we often stumble aimlessly. May we indeed look within us, patiently, wisely, for the eternal world-spirit,—the Good,—the God,—which, if we quell not its voice, speaks ever in our souls, saying, Be valiant, and true, and desirous ever of new attainment! Be pure and upright in soul! Be steadfast and strong in thought, and progressive in deed,—and fear not the world nor what the world may say!

Looking thus within us, this voice we shall hear. And hearing, may we obey it! Then shall we not fear, though death and evil encamp against us. We shall be blessed.

14.

Entering, each one of us, this hour, into the secret place of our own souls; bowing there, in the presence of the Ideal which ever beckons us, and acknowledging with contrition our frequent shortcomings, we would here vow ourselves anew, and all that we have, to the Blessed Best,—the Best of which we can conceive.

We seek for truth, and for strength to follow that

truth. We seek for wisdom, that our life-path may be a path in true accord with the laws of things,—in true accord with the physical and moral and spiritual forces about us in the universe,—from obedience to which, only, come health and blessing and peace. To this end, may we study daily, and take counsel of one another, that we may enter wisely into the sublime results of all past human discovery and research, making the most of our later and better opportunities. Many saviours have given their lives for us. Other men labored, and we have entered into their labors. Shall we ourselves not do something for those who are around about *us;* who are to follow *us?* At least we may obey,—obey the truth and the right; at least we may so live as to add nothing to the weight of the world's sin or to the depth of the world's sorrow.

May *desire* for obedience be ours, and the will to obey: that when we go back again whence we came—our bodies to the dust, our souls to further co-working with the developing energy—we may leave the world a little purer, a little truer, a little sweeter, a little cleaner, for our having lived! This is our great desire—this is our hope and prayer.

Again would we bear on our hearts, this hour, the grief of all who grieve, over the whole earth. May they be heroic grievers, and we compassionate comforters. And may all men do what they can to de-

crease sin in the world—to *do away* with sin; to do away with all harshness also, and all uncharitableness and unloveliness of spirit; that life for all men may be nobler, truer and grander, and the world be blessed.

15.

SURROUNDED ever by the infinite helpfulness, we would look up! It is good for us, as men and women, to turn our thoughts upward and out towards the soul of things, searching after the matters that concern our highest welfare. It is good for us to meet, to take each others' hands and look into each others' faces, finding in each others' presence and thought, strength and help and courage and trust. We are not here upon this bank and shoal of time without grave and great responsibilities. Around us is the sea of human life, dark often, and often in turmoil. Drifting by us go the wrecks of human lives, shattered on the rocks of mere sensuous gratification—of passion and intemperance and apathy. Ahead of us are the beacon-lights of Knowledge, pointing our way, and illuminating the charts of Purity and earnest Endeavor,—which, followed aright, guide to the haven of Peace, to the harbor of true manly and womanly Perfection.

May we have power to follow aright! And may we have the will and the wish, as light comes to ourselves, to show others, also, the way,—to help those

who lack power and will of their own, to the cultivation of stronger courage and higher purpose.

We feel that all depends upon ourselves; that nothing is ever done for us, in any outside, mysterious, miraculous way. If we would be strong in body, we must exercise our muscles and follow the laws of health. If we would be mentally competent, we must study and read and reason. If we would be morally perfect, we must fight evil and follow the good. If we would have soul-peace, we must look up and out, and trust the eternal heart of good, the eternal providence which permeates all things, *and put ourselves in accord with this.*

May this be our aim, and our endeavor, always. Thus we shall have peace, and constant courage. Hope will be ours—a light to our feet, a happiness to our souls.

16.

UNKNOWN, yet well-known, invisible, yet ever-present in manifestation, is the divine energy in whose life we live, before which, in reverence and aspiration, we bow! Would that it, the source of all truth, might enter this hour into our souls, and uplift and bless us! While its beauty lies around us, may we not be unmindful of it all. May we open our inmost being to its reception—fling wide the portals of the heart, and cry, Come in, come in, thou blessed of all

worlds! thou, and thou alone, canst animate and exalt us!

We are the children of the universe. We are the offspring of the developing forces which thrill and throb through all, working up through cycles wide. We and they are "one." May we *recognize* our high kinship! our potential divinity and nobility! our possibilities! And then may we live worthily, as knowing what we ought to be! We indeed do not know ourselves fully. We do not know whence we are, nor whither we go. But we feel that we are greater than we know. And we would so live as to carry ourselves on and up to all possible heights. We know that the soul is the high part of us; that the mind, the intellect, the moral nature within us, is the true god-part of us—the part which to aggrandize is to create true life and blessedness for ourselves.

Then may this be our holy task!—to live high, pure, temperate, helpful lives. So shall true gratitude and joy, and ever new upward-looking, be ours, and we shall not miss the great salvation.

17.

THE sunlight speaks, to-day, to our eyes. And the mystery of life and death, and of the order and beauty of the worlds, speaks to our souls. All the deep things of life call to us—love and hope and despair—music, song, speech—friendship, hatred—obedience,

disobedience! All call to us, and bid us seek the upbuilding, the eternal things. For the others are weights upon us, and upon humanity, and hold the far-off, final good from a speedier coming—hold blessedness from blessing us.

The eternal power calls to us. Its word is Harmony! The Moral Ideal calls to us. Its word is Perfection! The future calls to us. Its word is, Live Wisely Now! These voices may we follow well. These goals may we attain.

And may we live not alone for ourselves, but for others also.

18.

WHAT weakness is ours from day to day! When we would do good, evil is present with us. When we would be strong, we fall. . . . . It is because we do not look in the right way, and in the right places, for help and strength! It is because we deny our potential divinity, and by ignoring it give it no space to work! Our souls are indeed often filled with divine upward-lookings. We hate the evil, and would follow the good. But we say to ourselves that we seem made so as half to rise and half to fall!—we excuse and dally with our sin! We seem to ourselves to be, at times, lords of all things,—and again, a prey to all things. We have no true confidence in ourselves! We are lacking in self-reliance!

Henceforth, may we be nobler. For we know where victory rests! We know that the higher things of the *spirit* are the things of the true life; that the soul, the mind, the god-like Will—this is what makes us men! And that the degrading things of thought and of body, are the things that keep us down, keep us low, keep us in despair of victory.

May we study and strive for power to overcome the evil in our nature—power to show forth the mental and spiritual in us. May we *study and labor* to gain the mastery over ourselves—to make the mental and spiritual the victor over the passion, the impatience, the unholy desire and ambition that hold us back. Thus *must* we do, if the power to overcome, which we seek, is ever ours! And thus *doing*, we shall be exalted. Henceforth for us there shall be abiding joy, which time nor human neglect nor earth's evil can ever take away.

May we have a care, also, for the world about us. May we do what we can to uplift men. May we not deem ourselves weak, and so do nothing. But be watchful, and seize on every slightest opportunity of bringing joy to souls that mourn, help to those in need, strength to those who sin, light to those in darkness. May we make ourselves a human providence!

19.

BOWING in the overshadowing presence of the infinite divine spirit which is the life and soul of all, we come together once again to seek for wisdom and strength and courage and hope. Overbrooded by what is more than intelligence; encompassed by what is more than love; enthralled by beauty and order that human thought is powerless to approach,—we seek to enter into it all, to fathom our duty as souls born out of it, and to live simple, earnest, natural lives in accord with it.

We do not need to ask it to come to us. It is all about us and around us and in us. It is the breath of our nostrils, it is the heart-blood of our hearts, it is the love that animates our souls, it is the power that guides our thought and directs our spoken word. It is law, love, will, wisdom, joy, peace, blessing, holy ambition, lofty desire. It is everything. It is all-in-all.

The infinite presence! We do not understand it! But we bow before it; we give ourselves up to it to work its highest in us. May we strive to come truly into *accord* with it—the onward-throbbing, progressive life which thrills through the worlds! May we be faithful to Conscience—Conscience is a part of it—the Moral Law within us. And may we strive for Wisdom to guide that Conscience, that it may throw

its forceful, urgent, irresistible appeals upon the side of truth and right and goodness, on the side of justice, of sympathy, and of daily, hourly patience and good-will. So shall our lives be blessed, and those around us enter with us into the blessing.

May all the sorrowing, this day, find peace; all the needy, help; all the sinning, strength to overcome; all the world, light and comfort and hope. And in taking this great wish for man upon our lips, be it ours also to resolve to strive, when we go out from this place, to put into actual helpful operation about us such human forces as shall go towards *bringing to pass* the blessing which we have in our hearts.

20.

WITH gratitude we gather, to acknowledge the bounty of the unseen yet eternal power which is our life, from which come all the varied means of our happiness, of our development, and of our new attainment; and towards which our hearts aspire, with eager wish to know and solve and understand. But we are weak, in a world whose forces are mighty; we are finite, in a universe that is unlimited; we are ignorant, while all about us there is the semblance of wisdom that is infinite. We *cannot* yet know, or solve, or understand, in entirety: we can but go forward bravely every day, doing our duty faithfully and honestly as it meets us; searching to know more,

yet not doubting or fearing because we know little, or because oftentimes there come shocks to our faith. "We can but trust that good shall fall, at last,—far off,—at last, to all, and every winter change to spring."

And we see and know enough to occupy our every thought and busy our every nerve! There are things that we know are true; there are things that we know are honest; there are things that we know are just, pure, lovely, and of good report: may we be inspired to feel that here indeed is virtue, and here is praise, and think on these things,—striving to bring these things more and more into our lives,—that our hearts may be strengthened, our hopes enlarged, our lives made beautiful and sweet and strong.

May all who mourn be comforted. May all who are in need find gracious helpers. May all who sin meet the counsel and assistance from their fellows which shall set their feet upon a rock. May all men, everywhere, be blessed—by the opening of their eyes and hearts to the infinite resources about them, and by holding to their human brotherhood.

21.

THE brightness and cheer of another morning call us to look off from all evil things of care and weariness and disappointment; call us to place our affections and desires on things of spiritual hope and progress;—call us to look up! We are conscious

that our higher ideals—of happiness, of good, of self-growth—are often rudely shattered. We attain not to the things we hoped. Earth's grief and loss come in, and temptations to weakness; and we feel, perhaps, that we are losing ground, rather than gaining, in the ways of the soul.

But may we never doubt the issue! May we still strive on! If material loss comes to us, may we know that there is something higher than mere material gain. If disappointment in our plans for toil, or for thought, comes to us, may we look for the nobler growth in ways of the inner life, which may have met us even in the very fact of our defeat: growth in the ways of patience, of sympathy, of helpfulness, of the power to be of light and cheer to others. Success here (may we feel), is of far greater worth than success there.

So may we come to know that life is indeed to be counted by pulsings of mind, of soul, of will, of human helpfulness, and not by pulsings of pride and fortune: that the *following* of the helpful, the beautiful and the lovable is more than the *gaining* of the temporal and gaudy.

This day may thoughts, words and hopes of cheer and comfort come to us. May we have come here to be helped; and may we go away feeling that we have been helped—feeling that through our earnest search for truth, and our upward-looking, we are

purer in heart, stronger to bear untried pain, better fitted for life's battles, better fitted to be a rest and strength to those about us.

22.

As the rain cometh down from the skies, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater,—so are all the sure mercies of the eternal developing power. We are never left alone. We are never unprovided for by the general providence. Morning and evening, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest—forever these go on; and forever they shall not fail while earth's forces last.

Around about us, also, is the world of spirit—within us is the universe of soul. This hour may the true dignity of a redeemed humanity be present in our thought: a humanity *redeemed through the power of spirit* from all ignorance and avarice and wrong. And may all our purpose be bent to the encouragement of the world, by all possible means, to purity, to truth, to temperance, and to good-will. This is what we are good for. To this may we make all else contribute.

23.

WITH earnest desire, this hour, we covet the best gifts. The fruits of the spirit we would make ours,

which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance. This is our aspiration, our great desire: that although the hindrances and difficulties and shortcomings of our lives are many, we still may struggle, ever, towards the right, and the just, and the pure, and throw all our influence on the side of truth.

May we have courage to meet the labors of life in a manful spirit. May we have strength to overcome the evil and follow the good. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, pure, lovely, of good-report,—if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, may we think on these things, and strive for their attainment.

In our homes and our business may we be patient and faithful. Seeing need, may we strive to alleviate it. Wherever there is darkness may we strive to bring light. Whatever is crooked may we strive to make straight. And laboring thus with heart and brain for the general enlightenment and the more rapid upward tendency of men, may we find the world, through *our* earnest living, growing visibly a little cleaner, sweeter, better, nobler, and nearer perfection.

May all who mourn be comforted; all who sin be enabled to overcome. May darkness and doubt flee away, and all men enter into the light.

24.

WITH many private cares, and personal wants and sorrows, we come together this day, seeking for some uplifting word of grace and power. We are always in need; and our souls are always going out after the Good—after the Divine—after the Moral Ideal—to find the strength and encouragement and trust for which they hunger and thirst.

This hour may our souls find what they seek, and be uplifted, urged onward, exalted!

We come also, bearing on our hearts, as always, the needs of our fellows! May mankind be blessed. May *we*, at least, though the whole world goes by on the other side, give ourselves to the task of purifying, in some appreciable degree, the commoner tendencies and morals of humanity; increasing the social welfare of our land, and giving the young about us a purer, wiser, more helpful start: this through all the little or large influence for good which we individually possess. May we be on the side, always, of the true and the pure; on the side of justice, and temperance, and honor, and honesty. Thus we shall be working, not only for ourselves, but for mankind,—and the deepest joy of life, the joy of the world-helper, shall come to us and bless us.

25.

WHAT are we, the children of the on-working elements, the children of the developing power of the worlds, in our weakness and ignorance, when we try to probe the secrets of the eternal progress, and lay them bare to our yearning gaze! We fall back baffled. "Surely it is a power that hideth itself." "O that we knew where we might find it, that we might come even to its seat!" Yet the eternal power, which in the far ages back made the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts also, and we are saved by hope. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; disquicted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Deathless in our hearts is love, and love is of the eternal—it shall not pass away!

Nor is *anything* ever lost. There is no such thing in the universe as annihilation. Nothing, no matter what the process of disintegration and apparent death which sweeps down upon it—nothing is ever anything but changed, *transmuted:* and almost always, if not indeed always, into something better and higher. And especially is that which is already good and high, bound in the very nature of things in the universe to ascend to the better and the best. "What is excellent is permanent." And life, love, aspiration, —all the beauties and graces and possibilities of the

human soul,—these are *the most* excellent things in the universe.

May peace, therefore, and trust, be this day with all who mourn for loved ones gone away! Out of their sorrow may joy arise; out of their pain, an unlooked-for blessedness: a blessedness and a hope which shall be to them as a sentinel who moves about from place to place, and whispers to the worlds of space, in the deep night, that "All is well!"

26.

SURROUNDED—forever inclosed—by the beauty, and order, and beneficence of the God-power, we would look up and on. May our souls this morning, and every morning, be open to the divine. May we seek to-day, and every day, the things that make for rightness, for purity, for peace. If in our lives day by day, and in our death by and by, we would be in true accord with the God-power which is and shall be forever our Being, we must seek for fellowship with the things of the spirit,—for the God is spirit. Too often, the poverty and weariness and grief of earth weigh us down. We are tied, body and soul, to the material and the worldly.

But ever, above all earth's toil, and disappointment, and bereavement, we hear the voices of the Prophets echoing; and the voice of the God in our own souls urges us, too, to look beyond: to look higher, deeper,

farther, till we come to the Heart of Things—which *must* be peace, and strength, and fullness, and everything that is satisfying, if we could only search it out and know it as it is. We are not orphans. The beatific God is our father and our mother,—the trees and flowers and hills are our sisters and brothers: all life is one; and all life is divine.

May we live worthy of our divine origin! May we labor to grow in grace and truth.

27.

Not with ungrateful hearts for the bounty of the world, and for the blessings of life, would we come together this hour. But rather, with hearts overflowing with thanksgiving and praise to the great all-spirit which is the world's life, and to the long list of noble men and women, who, accepting in the past the conditions of human existence as they found them, and mastering the forces of nature about them, have through unnumbered generations combined to make life, for us to-day, sweet, forceful, uplifting, and full of opportunity. All that we have we owe to the one, the eternal, and to the many, the human family. May we be grateful to both, and strive so to use our blessings and possibilities aright, that our lives may show forth the greatness of our heritage.

We would be masters of the evil about us; we would be workers only of the good. We know that

we might be more faithful than we are! The sense of our shortcomings weighs us oftentimes down! May we be helped, through our own patient study and struggle, to attain unto greater nobility of purpose, to greater strength of will. May we resolutely *determine* to give up our besetting sins, whatever they are; to put them away from us forever: and henceforth labor only to the end of mental and spiritual progress, and to the exalting of the divine within us.

And grateful for the heritage of the past, may we not be unmindful of the future. As other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors, may we see if by faithful living and earnest work we may not add something to the abundance we ourselves have found, that those who follow us may be likewise blessed. We *can* thus add—by being ourselves pure and true; by upholding the wise thought of modern lovers of humanity; by discountenancing all those many falsities of religion which are about us on every side; by reaching out a helping hand to our brothers and sisters in need. Be this our work! Be this our privilege and our joy!

28.

TOGETHER let us lift our hearts and our wills in aspiration! For without upward-looking, life is sordid and mean, and we should often despair.

Would that our eyes might be opened, and our ears, and our souls, to the divine spirit of the God! Then should we have courage and strength for all our need. For the God is our life, and in its presence is helpfulness forevermore. And if we seek it, it is near to us, even in our hearts! We do not need to call it to come down to us, as if it were in the skies; we have no words that could bring it closer than it is always. For it is with us ever, upholding us, indwelling in us, urging us on. Our desire need be simply for *openness of sight.* And we would urge ourselves to inward purity and cleanliness,—to inward earnestness,—and to outward patience and temperance and helpfulness, that thus we and all around us may be *able to receive* the inheritance which is ours; which has been ours from the foundation of the world;—receive it, simply by proving ourselves worthy of it and capable of it!

Our hands have but to reach out,—what we seek is ours. Our ears have but to open,—the harmony of the everlasting spheres fills them full. Our eyes have but to unclose,—the light of lights dashes the blindness from them forever, and we sit down in the heavenly places of peace. We *see!*

May we, then, *strive*, daily and hourly, for victory over whatever is low in us, that the high may have room and place. May we endeavor to root out the "animal" in us, and give place to the "angel" that

may be. Patience we would make ours, for the trials of life. Hope we would make ours, for the encouragement of the future. Faithfulness we would make ours, for the true living of the Now. May we be blest in all! And giving our wills to duty's daily task, our souls to belief in good, our hands to the uplifting and comforting of our world-fellows, we shall be no longer in weariness or doubt, but shall be cheered and strengthened by the Light of lights, and in that Light we shall see light.

29.

In the presence of that which to us is the All-in-all; in the presence of that which to us is the Ideal Purity and Truth and Good—the ideal onward and upward reaching—how feeble and poor and unsatisfactory, often, appear our own weak lives!

Yet we know where strength is! We know where help lies forevermore. Daily we reach out with our hands, and take earth's blessing of sunlight and flower and fruit. With receptivity of *soul* may we reach out also, and find ourselves filled—our whole being filled—with the divine *spirit* which forever envelops us! The voice of the God is all about us, and in our own hearts. The high words of the ages sound in our ears; the scriptures of all lands show forth the way. A myriad saviours reveal to us their own personal divine strength over temptation, over

the power of sin and evil and sorrow, and say to us, "Do ye likewise overcome! For to him that overcometh is the crown of life!"

Be it ours indeed to follow on to know and do! To give up all selfishness and pettiness and sin—thrust them far from us; and turn our hearts and wills to good. May we not always seek our own selfish pleasure only! For, so, we can never come into real rejoicings of spirit or divine peace of mind. We shall be ever in turmoil. May we know, the rather, that there is a higher law than that of self-pleasing, and that this higher law is self-denial,—willing self-sacrifice for noble ends. Then, in our lives, instead of winds contrary, and wild seas, we shall find turmoil subsiding. The eternal comfort shall whisper, "Peace, be still!" And there shall be a great calm.

30.

TRUTH calls us,—and we follow on to know. Light cheers us,—we walk in its glow and warmth. Perfection beckons us,—gladly and determinedly we *pursue*, that we may more nearly attain unto it!

Around us are many high voices, urging us on. Henceforth may we be more faithful! Around us are Nature's order and beauty, thrilled through forever with her progressive laws. In that beauty may we find rest and incitement; in that order, encouragement; and strength in all earth's myriad developing

forces, which forever work on as a mighty Will! The little cares, and aggravations, the losses and fears and sins, of our daily experience,—may we resolve that here *we* will put forth will likewise: resolve that these things shall no longer be our masters, as in the past, but be held in control by *us*. For we are souls with infinite capacities! No man ever yet saw where, as a soul, he should have to cease to know, or do, or overcome. This being true, why are we content, so often, with the small results which we attain! with so little to show, from day to day, in the way of victory over ourselves; in the way of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance!

A divine dissatisfaction possesses us!—we gather this hour for words of hope and cheer and instruction! May it be with high resolves that we have come together; with determination that what we learn this hour shall be made to have power in the strengthening of our lives!

And growing in strength ourselves, may we then reach out the hand of our own faith, and touch some other hand,—the hand of the needy, the hand of those in doubt, the hand of those in fear and darkness and all spiritual want. May we give as well as take; offer as well as ask. Thus we and all about us shall grow in good, and the good shall be our salvation forevermore.

31.

In remembrance of all World-Helpers.

As in the presence of the mighty wonders of the earth and heavens we stand awed, abashed, and worshipful, so do we stand in awe and aspiration in the presence of all mighty souls. Mountains cause our hearts to leap within us. The ocean casts about us a spell as of enchantment. The rainbow hushes us to silence. The stars in their courses call forth from us whisperings of grateful admiration at their order and beauty.

So at the story of all noble prophets we bow humbly—in gratitude for their lives, and with desire to imitate their example. The history of the saint of India fills us with tender zeal for our fellow-men; the faithfulness of the martyr of Athens touches our own wills to earnest purpose; the story of the man of Galilee calls on us for admiring love, urges us to courageous purity and energy like his, and to such faithful support of truth and progress as he evinced. So of *all* who have labored for man,—the saviours east and west; the prophets beyond the seas, and the heroes of our own land, who gave their lives for us.

Great is *our* work, great is our *duty*, if we, like them, are to be of use—in the upbuilding either of ourselves or of humanity! May we be faithful to every call! Mighty is the need around about us. Numberless are the woes and wants of men. The

physical, the "animal" part of man, is still strong within him, and overrides his higher nature. Still is needed the warning, persuasive cry of numberless World-Helpers, "Blessed are all they who seek the ways of purity, of peace, and of good-will! Blessed are all who seek the higher life, the life of the soul; and who strive for the uplifting of their fellow-men! For theirs is joy unspeakable; satisfaction deep beyond the touch of temporal disaster!"

May all holy purpose and energy indeed be ours! Then, truly, we shall be led in the "Way of Life," and the World-Helpers shall not have lived and sacrificed in vain.

32.

In special thought of Duty.

In the overshadowing presence of the world-power we bow! It is by that we are upheld! We are its children! Our lips, it may be, falter when we would name it aright; we may not fix our eyes upon it, nor grasp it with our hands. But we live by it! Our *souls* know of it! And when they know of it most, they would embrace it the most, and strive most to be one with it! For so, only, comes peace.

We would know of it to-day! And we think we cannot know of it better than by learning of Duty. It is Duty which binds us fast to the nature of things. In the gleam of the Moral Ideal we have the secret

heart of the universe laid bare to us. May our aim be to follow that Ideal, till we come into its rest! There is no blessedness without struggle towards it. There is no peace that is not peace with *it*.

And it touches our lives on every hand. We cannot think a thought, nor entertain a desire, nor speak a word, nor put a deed into act, without either beautifying, or marring, its luster. Above all, can we never be *selfish*, without deplorable damage to our souls; without hindering our true spiritual progress; without weakening our deepest and highest possibilities of life and growth. Self-sacrificing we *must* be, when the happiness of others is involved, or when our own later and better good waits to be enhanced. Pure, temperate, chaste we must be; self-deniers of the merely worldly, self-deniers of the body's baser hungers, of the mind's inferior desires. Generous we must be,—full of sympathy for others; lovers of our world-brothers and world-sisters; never avaricious, never unjust, never even *thoughtless* of others' good. Patient, also, with men, and with daily events, must we be: patient with men's weaknesses and sins; patient under the daily crossings and disappointments of our own lives,—*not seeking only our own self-pleasing*. And strong must we be, moreover, on the side of truth and right; strong to be the helpers of the helpless, the teachers of the ignorant, the lifters-up of the abased. . . . . *And then*—blessedness shall come to us!

The Moral Ideal!—may we be fâithful to it, at whatever earthly result to ourselves. Duty!—may we cling to it as the saviour of our souls.

33.

For the Passing of Winter.

We are always in need: we are not altogether sufficient unto ourselves. What shall satisfy us? What shall give us the peace and blessedness for which we strive?

For months, the cold of Winter has been about us. We have waited for the returning sun. It climbs, now, day by day, higher and higher up the heavens; is brighter and warmer week by week. We have not waited in vain. Soon the Spring will burst upon us with full arms of leaves and flowers. The need of our bodies will be satisfied.

What shall meet the need of our souls! The Winter of trial, of disappointment and bereavement, is about us always. We wait for the all-conquering Light! May we have the hope and courage, this Easter morning, to look through Nature to Nature's inspiring spirit! and in the beauty and order and progress of the universe, find a symbol of what yet shall be in our own souls,—if, giving up all the follies and dishonesties of our lives, we work individually, and together, to bring in the reign of honor, of virtue and truth, and of obedience to life's higher laws!

34.

For the Coming of Spring.

THIS morning, while the sunlight, and the song of bird, and the springing grass-blade call us to rejoice, may our *souls* be open, as well as our eyes and ears, to all hopeful, helpful, divine influences! May the springing leaf be type of the new unfolding of our own higher selves. May the fragrance of the blossoms now all about us, be type of the good-influence which shall emanate from our daily lives. May the sunlight type the kindness and strength which we shall shed abroad upon those about us.

May all men everywhere, this day, be blest with peace and trust; with hopefulness; and with determined wills to do the right. And may all men reach out their hands in mutual helpfulness. Men *must* be pure in heart and thought; they *must* be honest and honorable in their dealings with each other. Thus only shall the springtide of deepest human joy ever be led up to, and the true life of the spirit begin.

35.

For the Fullness of Summer.

BREATHED upon yet once more, and animated, and blest, this new glad day, by the unseen, unknown, unfathomed Spirit of All, gladly we come together once again, to give voice to our soul's cry of grat-

itude for all the blessings of life—for the order and beauty, and strength, and uplifting power of the naural world about us. If *we* did not speak, the very stones in the roadway would cry out! Whether we speak or not, the leaves upon the trees laugh and rustle in delight, and clap their hands; and the flowers in the gardens and by the roadsides wave and nod, and "utter joyous leaves of dark green," and scatter unmeasured fragrance. The rain comes down in gentle flow, in showers that water the earth. And the birds join all, with their unbroken song around the world, as the earth whirls east into the sun. "O heart of man! canst thou not be blithe as all these are, and as free?"

This morning, how low and awful seems all evil! how unfitting all degrading thoughts and deeds! how out of accord with the simple order and beauty of life, as we conceive it might be! May we seek for strength and courage, that henceforth our lives may be upright and sweet and clean—free from all spot or blemish or any such thing! Spirit of beauty and truth! come and dwell with us! Spirit of progress! inspire us! Spirit of good! spirit of purity and holiness and good-will and earnest purpose and lofty desire! take up thy abode with us!

36.

For a Memorial Service.

AGAIN, at the developing call of the spirit of progress, we are brought to face the great Mystery of life and death: and we feel ourselves as little children who look up at the sky and wonder what is and is to be; whence we came, and why we are here, and whither we go? Yet is there, in our hearts, nothing of fear or dread or dismay! We know we are "in the bosom of life and universal brightness"; we know that we go on and up from life to life—since the forces of God are eternal. Eye indeed hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the detail of the things that shall be—the things that are "prepared." But from the things which we do see, we trust the things that shall be. And we see, around us ever, order and beauty and progress—which we feel cannot but mean order and beauty and progress for evermore. The power which developed us, which brought us to be, is mighty enough and great enough to care for us ever. And to whatever part of the wide universe our souls may escape, we know that we cannot be beyond the scope of beneficence and care, of upbuilding and progress. Safe now, we are safe ever. Then indeed may our hearts rest confident. We may be at peace, and may trust both for *life* and for death.

Human love is ours, also. So that to each other, in our hours of darkness, we reach out hands of fellowship. May we repose on each other's love and sympathy; and in the mutual stress of life, its hope and its doubt, we shall find calmness coming into our hearts, rest into our souls, clear vision into our minds. We shall not doubt, but go forward courageously, and even in the Valley of the Shadow find joy.

May all this indeed come to us, and may we all be blest!

37.

For a Memorial Service.

In the presence of the eternal power and mystery we bow—in the presence of the mighty reality, the spirit-energy of the universe, whose children we are! in whose throbing bosom exists the mystery of Life; within whose secret bosom lies the mystery of Death! Recognizing our ignorance, yet rejoicing in our hope; feeling our weakness at this presence again in our midst of the Messenger which calls away this our dear friend from our earthly sight,—we join our tears, our sympathy, and our hopes, looking for light and encouragement and consolation and faith and trust. Now we see as through a glass, darkly. But we feel this is not all. We are confident this is not all. And we follow on to know.

We believe that all things work together for final

good,—all things throughout the universe. Pain is an evil, while it lasts. Sorrow and loss; lack, of any kind; fear and doubt, sickness and death,—looked at nakedly, these seem evils likewise. But looked at largely, all things indeed, we feel, work together for final good. The universe as a whole goes on at all because it is good and not bad, or more good than evil. And we dwell even now in Eternity, which is made of time. The things of time are the things of Eternity. The power divine and infinite which is our life, the spirit-energy of the worlds, the mystery of eternal being, which we call "God," is around about us and over us and in us now, as much as it will ever be. May we therefore *trust* it now, and believe it good, even in this our time of great need, although indeed we may seem to see at present only clouds and darkness; even though we seem utterly to fall with our load of care, upon the world's great altar-stair that slopes upward and out towards the eternal! We *will* trust the Heart of Good, and look towards the future hopefully!

May peace and trust be with all these who mourn! With heart of sympathy we reach out *our* hands, and clasp theirs; assuring them of our love and good-will, and desiring that out of their sorrow joy may arise, out of their pain, and unlooked-for blessedness: a blessedness and a hope, which shall be to them a saving power.

POEMS.

UPLIFTS OF HEART AND WILL.

Uplifts of eager heart and earnest will!
Pulsings of soul!—
These, in their high, unintermittent surge,
Make Being whole. . . .

Surgings of Spirit tow'rds the unknown source
Whence cometh all;
Surgings of Will to Duty, fair or hard,
Whate'er befall:

Ambitions high, to follow nobly out
The earthly Real;
Resolves no less to breathe heaven's purer air—
The far Ideal!

Strugglings for self—to win and nobly use
Time's fairer good;
Strugglings sublime for others—to make fact
Man's brotherhood!

Not surgings for an hour to rush and roar,
And then subside;
But higher, holier surgings, that shall pour
In endless tide. . . .

These are the Race, the Goal, the Home, the God,
In all earth's strife;
These are and shall be ever, soul of our soul,
Life of our life.

THE PASSAGE.

Whence came these words I may not note . . .
I walked beneath the tranquil stars;
A Voice, as from their golden bars,
Said "Write!" to me;—I therefore wrote.
E'en yet I feel the tremulous thrill!
I tread again the pine-clad hill!

GENEVA, Illinois, April, 1887.

A MYSTERY?—true; yet I fear not to go.
Nothing harsh can be. Indeed, when I know

We are never alone,—that within us and out
Throbs ever the Might that engirds us about;

That the Power which developed us reigns through all,
A limitless Sea—not a vertical Wall;

When I learn how the Forces of Death and Life
Interplay forever, yet are never at strife;

When I know that the Order and Beauty around
With the Life of the All-Life ever abound;

That every bird on yonder tree
Is thrilled a-through with God's own glee;

That every leaf beside our path
A message from the Eternal hath;

That every gleam from human eye
Is a gleam of the All-Soul's Mystery,—

Fain would I leave this house of clay,
To mingle again with the ocean spray,

To whirl with the atom, or dance with the light,
Or glow in a star to illumine earth's night.

Things fail not. Though earth-life has passage like dreams
The Order Eternal yet pulses and streams.

I say not "soul" passes! I only can know
That pass if it must, 'tis to else it will go.

It cannot be lost. It is bound up with All;
And while anything lasts shall the Soul of things fall?

Come, Death! For him thou hast terrors nor pains
Who deems, though he vanish, he deathless yet reigns!

SPENCER, Mass., August, 1885.

GOD AND MAN.

WHERE is Beauty? Where is Grace?
  Their strength what Power embodies?
Look within a human face,—
  Where love and help are, God is.
Seek this mystery to trace!—
Heaven and earth its lines embrace,
Souls, and suns, and stellar space.

Wondrous is the mighty Power
  In which we have our being!
Every day and every hour
  Brings joy for hearing, seeing;
Joy of stream and star and flower,
Joy of sky-flung spectrum-bower,
Planet-haze and atom-shower.

Love, no less, of human hearts,
  Which makes all life worth living,
From the One, the Only, starts,
  Man's highest glory giving.
This to know transcends all arts,—
From the Whole, the partial darts;
Man's love God's love counterparts.

STRUGGLE.

'Tis well, O heart, no life of ease
  Before thee opens fair!
That perfect life would fail to please
  Which breathed but softer air.

'Tis not when zephyrs kindly blow,
  And calmly, sweetly steal;
When waters musically flow,
  And laugh along the keel;

'Tis in the dashing of life's wave,
  And in the sudden shock;
'Tis when the soul, though stout and brave,
  Is ground as on the rock,

That life's objective port is neared,
  Its noblest courses run,
And souls of men the straightest steered
  To Isles of inward Sun.

THE HELPER.

He who the light to one dark soul shall bring,
Among the sons of men is more than king.

. . . . . .

No word thou utterest, or good or ill,
But sounds forever,—wild or soft or shrill,—
Fast held within the vibrant air's embrace.
If words of thine shall brighten one sad face,
Thine accents ease a brother's heavy load,
Thy daily task reveal where Truth is strowed,
Then rest content! For there shall come a year
(And soon shall come) when back into thine ear
With ten-fold power thy words, or ill or good,
Shall speed with force that may not be withstood.
Then happy thou, if in thine ear shall ring
Words that shall crown thee servant,—helper,—king!

MORNING.

O UPWARD-SPRINGING Morning light!
Forth-bursting from the caves of Night
To dissipate earth's pall and gloom,
And for man's ways and work make room!

Beneath thy all-enkindling ray
Our souls expand to greet the Day,
And fain would catch, on Wisdom's road,
The light to Life's serene abode!

When shall man's acts be based on Law,
Till nations show nor stain nor flaw?
Nor man from Virtue's fairer heights
Be held by ancient appetites?

O flame of ever brightening Truth!
Earth's waywardness, as of its youth,
Dispel, revealing manhood's strength,
That life diviner be at length!

LIFE'S BEAUTY.

Oh, when often in my bosom
  Glows a longing for life's Beauty,
Something in me whispers,—urging,—
  " 'Tis incentive to life's Duty!
    'Tis high impetus to Duty!"

And I know the voice speaks truly!
  For high peace finds never mortal
Save in strong, sublime endeavor
    Worshipful at Duty's portal;
    Steadfast, meek, at Duty's portal.

Flame, then, in my bosom, Beauty!
  Flame and glow with fire supernal!
Thou shalt lead me—willing go I!—
    To life's blessedness eternal,
    Unto joys ideal, eternal!

BEACON-LIGHTS.

THE brilliant beacon-lights that bound the shore
  Guide safe the storm-tossed mariner to port:
  What matter, green or gold, or tall or short?
  What matter, shown from rock, or bluff, or tower?
He questions not their color, size, or power,
  But heeds their warning with his every thought:
  He heeds their warning, and the ship is brought
  To home and harbor in a happy hour.

Along the headlands of Life's turbulent sea
  Aye gleam undimmed the guiding lights of Love!
  What matter, Jew, Greek, Christian, if the Light
Be followed faithfully?—It then shall be
  A Guiding Light indeed, to Ports above:
  A pillar of cloud by day, of fire by night.

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